SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.

CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

California Elections Division | 1500 11th Street, 5th Floor | Sacramento, CA 95814
Tel 916.657.2166 | Fax 916.653.3214 | www.sos.ca.gov

January 7, 2022

County Clerk/Registrar of Voters (CC/ROV) Memorandum #22004

TO: All County Clerks/Registrars of Voters

FROM: Jason Rosales
              Associate Elections Analyst

RE: VoteCal: County Test Environment for the February 2022 Release

The Secretary of State (SOS) has developed a dedicated County Test Environment (CTE) for counties to conduct testing between VoteCal and their Election Management System (EMS). The CTE contains a copy of the full VoteCal production database and a copy of the databases of those counties that choose to opt in to use the test environment. The CTE provides counties the ability to test and confirm fixes, enhancements, or changes, as well as conduct training.

The next VoteCal CTE release is scheduled for February 27, 2022. Currently, thirty (30) counties are participating in the CTE, and each reported the ability to conduct end-to-end testing or training in the CTE. Additional counties who have met the "opt-in" responsibilities outlined below can choose to opt in by January 10, 2022, in order to be included in the February 2022 CTE. Counties that are currently participating do not need to opt in again.

The SOS intends to lead user acceptance testing in the CTE environment from February 7, 2022, to February 14, 2022, prior to the VoteCal scheduled release on February 27, 2022. CTE counties will also have the opportunity to conduct regression testing and/or training prior to this release.

Per CCROV 18206, dated August 29, 2018, state and federal HAVA funding has been authorized by the state and federal governments to be used for county efforts to improve cybersecurity and infrastructure related to VoteCal. One of the appropriate uses of the HAVA funds identified in the scope of work is for establishing, maintaining, and participating in the dedicated VoteCal CTE.

SCHEDULE

The CTE schedule for the February 27, 2022, release is attached. The schedule details the responsible party, description, and the start and end dates of each CTE task.

In order to create a synchronized test environment, participating CTE counties will create a backup copy of their EMS production database(s) at the same date and time that VoteCal takes a production backup on January 14, 2022, at 11:00 p.m.

Opt-in counties will have the following responsibilities in order to participate:

1. Possess and maintain appropriate and necessary hardware and software licenses to set up and support a local EMS test environment.

2. Provide and maintain a secure local EMS test environment containing a full copy of county production data.

3. Complete local production database backups and copies to the CTE at mutually-agreed times, anticipated to occur quarterly.

4. Ensure security of voter data by following the county security steps as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

5. Set up networks, ports, firewalls, and other appropriate infrastructure necessary to establish connectivity to the CTE and troubleshoot connectivity issues as required.

6. Maintain the connection from the county EMS test environment to the CTE.

7. Update the county EMS test environment with new EMS releases according to a pre-defined schedule. Identify, and/or create within the test environment, the required data for any tests that the county intends to execute and conduct the desired testing.

8. Request file-based interface execution from the SOS as needed to support county tests.

If your county would like to opt in and participate in the CTE, please complete and sign the attached MOU describing the roles and responsibilities between the SOS and counties and complete the attached VoteCal County Test Environment (CTE) Opt-in Form by close of business on **January 10, 2022**. If you are a county that is already participating in the CTE, you do not need to complete and return this form nor the MOU.

If you have any questions, please contact the VoteCal Help Desk at (888) 868-3225 or votecalhelp@sos.ca.gov.

Attachments

1. County Test Environment Schedule
2. Memorandum of Understanding
3. VoteCal County Test Environment Opt-in Form

SCHEDULE FOR THE COUNTY TEST ENVIRONMENT
February 27, 2022, Release Schedule

The schedule below represents estimated start and end dates for the counties, EMS, CGI, and the SOS for the County Test Environment (CTE):

#	Responsible Entity	Task	Start	End
1	NEW Counties	Respond to CCROV indicating Opt-In status and signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	N/A	1/10/2022
2	SOS/ITD	Assign an MPLS IP address for the CTE and grant access to the DMV HAVA endpoint for new counties	N/A	1/10/2022
3	NEW Counties	Complete setup activities for CTE environment per MOU (see section titled **"County Responsibilities"**)	N/A	1/10/2022
4	SOS/Elections	Provide new Opt-In counties with access credentials and endpoints	1/11/2022	1/11/2022
5	SOS/Elections	Contact counties as needed (with ITD/CGI support) to verify correct setup of county networks, ports, firewalls, and connectivity	1/11/2022	1/11/2022
6	All CTE Counties	Take a backup copy of the County EMS Production database at 11:00 p.m. and place into County EMS CTE	1/14/2022 11:00 p.m.	1/14/2022 11:00 p.m.
7	SOS/CGI	Take a backup copy of the VoteCal Production database at 11:00 p.m. and place into VoteCal CTE	1/14/2022 11:00 p.m.	1/14/2022 11:00 p.m.
8	SOS/CGI	Copy VoteCal production data and place this into the VoteCal CTE VOTECAL CTE WILL BE DOWN	1/17/2022	1/28/2022
9	NEW Counties	Receive and install the current EMS release into the county EMS CTE	1/10/2022	1/17/2022
10	SOS/Elections	Contact counties to verify that the EMS backup was successful and backup to be saved to the EMS CTE by end date listed	1/17/2022	1/28/2022
11	All CTE Counties	Receive and install the updated EMS release into the County EMS CTE (and/or confer with EMS to determine what updates are needed) COUNTY TO INSTALL RELEASE PRIOR TO RECONNECTING TO VOTECAL CTE	1/24/2022	1/28/2022
12	SOS/CGI	Install the updated VoteCal release into the VoteCal CTE VOTECAL CTE WILL BE DOWN	1/28/2022	1/28//2022

13	All CTE Counties	Conduct a connectivity/smoke test as needed with all counties to verify that VoteCal search works from the County EMS CTE	2/1/2022	2/1/2022
14	All CTE Counties/SOS	User Acceptance Testing (UAT) of the VoteCal release led by SOS within the CTE environment	2/28/2022	3/7/2022
15	Counties	Opted-in counties regression test and/or train as needed within the CTE and report any issues to the VoteCal Help Desk	2/28/2022	On-going

Note: Counties are expected to install any new EMS version provided for production to the CTE.

Between

California Secretary of State, Elections Division, VoteCal

and

Participating County

Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to establish responsibilities and resources required between the Secretary of State (SOS) and County for establishing and utilizing a connected VoteCal County Test Environment (CTE).

Term

The term of this MOU is for the entire period(s) in which a County chooses to opt-in. The parties may extend the term of (or amend) this MOU by written agreement signed by the parties hereto. Any party may terminate this MOU upon 30 days' written notice to the other party.

County Responsibilities:

The County shall be responsible for the following activities:

1. Possess and maintain appropriate and necessary hardware and software licenses to set up and support a local Election Management System (EMS) test environment.

2. Provide and maintain a secure local EMS test environment containing a full copy of county production data.

3. Complete local production database backups and copies to the CTE at mutually-agreed times, anticipated to occur quarterly.

4. County Security

    (a) Each county shall protect the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of the data and the information systems authorized to process, store, and transmit voter registration data. County voter registration and election information systems shall conform to recognized United States Federal and California State government security standards and practices including system hardening and utilize diversity of design.

    (b) It is recommended that each county provide annual privacy and security awareness training to all staff utilizing their county voter registration and election information in accordance with State Administrative Manual (SAM) Sections 5320 – 5320.2 and the Information Practices Act of 1977 (California Civil Code §§1798 et seq).

    (c) The following security measures shall be maintained by each county and their EMS to provide security for county voter registration and election information systems and environments that interface with the statewide voter registration system and/or contain statewide voter registration system data.

        (1) Physically secure servers hosting county voter registration and election information systems including the county's EMS and county EMS databases as well as any SOS property, such as routers, away from public access.

        (2) Only staff authorized by the county shall have physical access to servers hosting the county's voter registration and election information systems including

Memorandum of Understanding for
California Statewide Voter Registration Database (VoteCal) Test Environment
Version 2.0

Between

California Secretary of State, Elections Division, VoteCal

and

Participating County

servers containing the county's EMS and county EMS database as well as any SOS property, such as routers.

(3) No peripheral devices (e.g., disk, USB/Flash drives, PDA/Smartphone, etc.) shall be attached to the SOS property, such as routers, installed at the county.

(4) SOS property installed at the county, such as routers, is exclusively for interaction with the SOS, and shall not to be used for other county purposes.

(5) The servers hosting the county voter registration and election information systems including the servers hosting the county's EMS shall be running an operating system under mainstream support with critical and high security updates applied at least monthly. All servers shall otherwise be hardened to industry best practices and government standards.

(6) The county voter registration and election information systems shall be installed and operated on a service account separate from any other services.

(7) All county voter registration and election information systems shall have anti-malware software installed, configured, and updates applied.

(8) Counties shall encrypt all voter registration and election information system data whenever stored in non-volatile memory and whenever in transit between system components or through facilities not contracted directly to the county or the SOS.

(9) All backup copies of county voter registration and election information system data, including images, shall be encrypted. Counties shall avoid the use of removable, portable media such as tape cartridges or DVD/ROM for data backup.

(10) Data encryption shall be compliant with National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) Special Publication (SP) 800-175B, Guideline for Using Cryptographic Standards in the Federal Government, with preferred utilization of Advanced Encryption Standard (AES).

(11) Direct user access to the county voter registration and election information systems shall require, at a minimum, single sign on authentication.

(12) County voter registration and election information systems shall only be accessible by staff authorized by the county.

(13) Confidential voter registration data shall only be accessible by staff authorized by the county.

(14) Counties shall report detected unauthorized use, suspected breach, denial of service, or intrusion attempts on county voter registration and election systems to the SOS Elections Division statewide voter registration system Help Desk within twenty four (24) hours of discovery.

5. Set up networks, ports, firewalls, and other appropriate infrastructure necessary to establish connectivity to the CTE and troubleshoot connectivity issues as required.

6. Maintain the connection from the county EMS test environment to the CTE.

Between

California Secretary of State, Elections Division, VoteCal

and

Participating County

7. Update the county EMS test environment with new EMS releases according to a pre-defined schedule. Identify, and/or create within the test environment, the required data for any tests that the County intends to execute and conduct the desired testing.
8. Request file-based interface execution from the SOS as needed to support county tests.

The parties hereto have executed this MOU through their duly authorized representatives.

COUNTY   CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE

By: _____   By: _____

Name: _____   Name: _____

Title: _____   Title: _____

County: _____   Date: _____

Date: _____

VoteCal County Test Environment (CTE) Opt-In Form
February 2022 Release

County of: _____   Mailing Address: _____

Contact Person: _____   _____

Telephone Number: _____   _____

Fax Number: _____   Email: _____

_____ Yes, we would like to opt-in (**also complete and sign MOU**)

_____ No, we would like to opt-out

Please return this form and signed MOU to the attention of VoteCal Help Desk via email to votecalhelp@sos.ca.gov or by fax to (916) 653-3214 by Monday, January 10, 2022.